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ABSTRACT

Using a pamphlet format, the Ad Hoc Rural Development Committee of the Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development formulated a working agenda that addresses the challenges and opportunities of rural development research and extension programming. The agenda establishes the need for emphasizing rural development in the Northeast, and presents four issues: (1) constructively using the natural environment in an urbanizing region; (2) enhancing rural economic productivity and adaptability; (3) enhancing institutions that contribute to the well-being of individuals, families, and communities; and (4) enhancing policy leadership, management capacity, and strategic planning to support rural community viability. The land-grant university cooperative extension system should continue to deliver educational programs that address the needs of rural residents, but should consider: (1) establishing interdisciplinary teams created to fit the nature of the particular problem it seeks to resolve; (2) coordinating efforts in rural development with various organizations within and outside a single state's land-grant university; and (3) strengthening its leadership role in rural development. The pamphlet contains a table listing the metro and nonmetro populations for each of the states in the Northeast and the change in population between 1980 and 1990. (KS)

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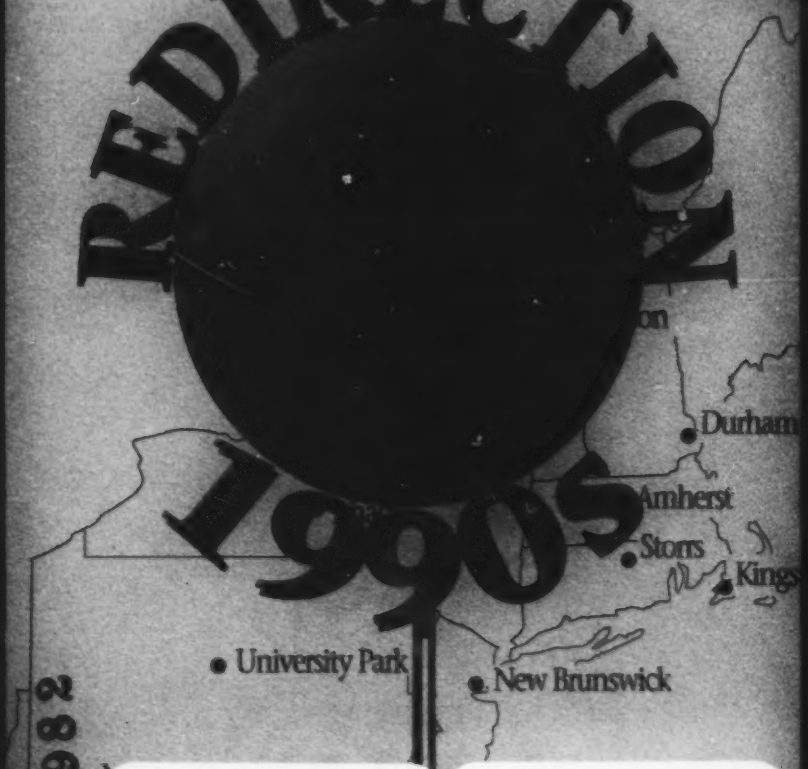
REDIRECTION 1990s



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Foreword

The Ad Hoc Rural Development Committee of the Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development, along with thirty-one participants at a "refinement workshop" in Morgantown, West Virginia, have formulated a timely, realistic, and achievable working agenda that assertively addresses the challenges and opportunities of rural development research and extension programming in the region. The land-grant university system is uniquely positioned and explicitly chartered to serve rural America—a task which demands proactive leadership from administrators and rural development professionals. Proactive leadership involves innovation in agenda setting, flexibility in resource allocation, and creativity in staffing research and extension efforts. The task of rural development for the Northeast Region is enormous and is demanding, but through concerted efforts, is achievable.

Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development
The Pennsylvania State University
104 Weaver Building
University Park, PA 16802
phone: (814) 863-4656
fax: (814) 863-0586

Daryl Heasley, Ph.D., CCD
Director

Key Rural Development Issues and Trends for the Twelve States and the District of Columbia Northeast Region: REDIRECTION FOR THE 1990s

Why Should Rural Development Be a Major Emphasis in the Northeast?

An essential fact faces most rural localities in the Northeast: as development occurs many small and rural communities are falling behind their metropolitan and suburban counterparts in dealing adequately with the issues at hand. Moreover, policies and practices intended to enhance rural development have been fragmented or ineffectively implemented.

Leaders and policy makers have been confused about the meaning of rural development. To many, *rural* implies an agricultural arena for food and fiber production, while *development* implies change, growth, and ready access to the products and services of an urban society. Today in the Northeast, while *development* still implies better access to goods and services, *rural* implies low population density and uneven access to the opportunities that are occurring in more highly "urbanized" localities. Enhancement of agriculture and other rural natural resources, in the rural Northeast especially, does not necessarily enhance social and economic development in rural areas.

Northeast rural localities are beset by an increasingly complex set of economic, social, environmental, and political forces stemming from both the U. S. metropolitan and global societies. National and worldwide economic restructuring, with or without the complicity of national and local politics, produces shifts in local economic and natural-resource infrastructures. Other forces, endemic to the fabric of American society, place increasing demands on local institutions to provide more effective services while receiving decreasing public support. Institutions for education, health care, youth and family services, families at risk, social equity, elderly and handicapped care, and infrastructural maintenance and improvement, are additional pressures to change and reorganize for greater effectiveness.

While rural localities are affected by these forces, they often lack the individual and organizational resources, expertise, and problem-solving skills required to deal effectively with their situations. Many rural localities have volunteer, part-time leaders and managers, while their urban counterparts engage full-time professionals to deal with public issues. Efforts to maintain and improve the viability and well-being of rural areas must be guided by an awareness of such structural imbalances. Rural development programs require strategies sensitive to these similarities and to unique needs.

Unlike rural areas in other regions of the nation, the rural economy of the Northeast is not driven by agricultural production. Slightly over 7 percent of the population of the region resides in nonmetropolitan areas, and less than 3 percent are directly engaged in production agriculture. Yet some traditional production agriculture and, increasingly, "niche agriculture" offer opportunities that are important to a sound rural economy.

In the rural areas of the Northeast states, the scenario for rural development takes on a particular uniqueness. The interface of rural places with the massive urban corridors from Washington, D.C., to Boston, Massachusetts, presents both a particular set of challenges and particular set of opportunities. (See Table 1)

The nearly fifty-nine million people who reside in the Northeast region place immediate pressures on limited land and water areas in the twelve Northeast states and the District of Columbia. Nearly 25 percent of the U.S. population resides in the Northeast region, on just 6 percent of the country's total land mass. Moreover, the Northeast region has two faces. There are the isolated communities in, for example, Northern New England, Western New York, Pennsylvania, and Southern West Virginia, as well as those communities in the growth corridor. In both of these extremes, new awareness of severe friction points in the people-to-space relationship has led to concerns for the effects of land use, natural resource utilization, and pollution and waste management on the quality of life for both urban and rural residents.

Structural and economic changes are creating new opportunities for rural economies while at the same time making them more vulnerable. Transportation and information linkages in rural areas are creating new patterns of employment, marketing, and other ties; but the rapidly increasing use can strain the physical infrastructure of these localities.

Environmental pressures, economic opportunities and challenges, and other changes will require greater human capital and institutional capacity. Our most critical resources for managing changes in rural areas are knowledgeable people and the viable groups they form. Based on the preceding considerations, four issues are presented here as key concepts driving a strategy for rural development research and extension in the Northeast:

1. Constructively Using The Natural Environment In An Urbanizing Region.
2. Enhance Rural Economic Productivity And Adaptability.
3. Enhance Institutions That Contribute To The Well-Being Of Individuals, Families, And Communities.
4. Enhance Policy Leadership, Management Capacity, And Strategic Planning To Support Rural Community Viability.

These issues are not the only ones affecting Northeast rural areas. But, they are among those that are having the greatest impacts, and they are at the core of rural development strategies. They also provide excellent opportunities for developing, implementing, and evaluating research and extension rural development programs at land-grant universities. Since the issues are so interrelated, the focus for rural development must be holistic, encompassing aspects of all four issue areas and their implications for individuals, families, communities, and institutions serving rural people in the Northeast.

The task demands the highest level of scholarly research as well as delivery of useful products to support and maximize the local educational outreach effort. The research and extension arms of the land-grant university system are uniquely well adapted and explicitly chartered to serve rural America. These units must work together with other units in the land-grant system as well as with those outside the system that may be interested in

rural development. If a balanced strategy is to result, this effort must focus on the relationship of individuals, families, institutions, and communities with the environment. In the end, a viable rural community is one that has strength demographically, socially, and economically. Such strengths depend on equitable distribution of and access to goods and services. They also depend on sustainable environmental conservation practices among people in the rural and metropolitan Northeast. The tasks for developing these conditions in the rural Northeast are enormous and demanding but, through concerted efforts, they are also achievable.

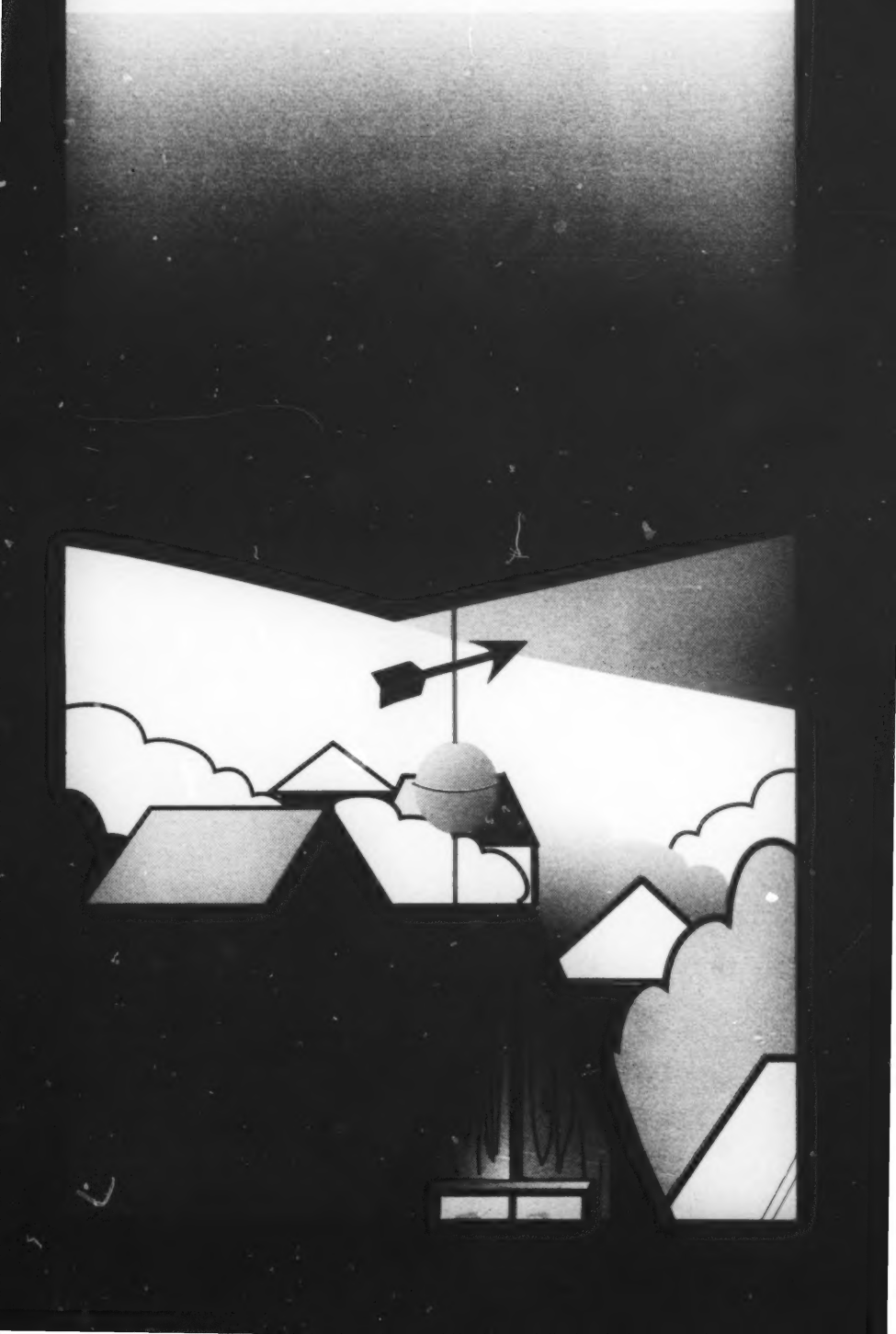


TABLE 1: Total Population in the Northeast, 1990 (in millions)

	Total	Metro@ Total
	N=300	**N=148**
New England	**13.1**	**10.8***
Northern New England	**2.9**	**1.3***
Maine	1.2	.5
New Hampshire	1.1	.7
Vermont	.6	.1*
Southern New England	**10.2**	**9.5**
Connecticut	3.3	3.0
Massachusetts	5.9	5.6
Rhode Island	1.0	.9
Mid-Atlantic	**37.8**	**34.3**
New Jersey	7.9	7.9
New York	17.9	16.2
Pennsylvania	12.0	10.2
Southern Tier	**7.9**	**6.0***
D.C.[1]	.6	.6
Maryland	4.7	4.3*
W. Virginia[1]	1.9	.7
Delaware	.7	.4*
Northeast Region	**58.8**	**51.1***
Unemployment Rates- 1989		**4.03%**

@ There are 300 independent cities and counties in the Northeast Region. Butler, M.A. Rural-Urban Continuum Codes for Metro and Non-metro Counties, USDA/ERS/ARED, Washington, D.C., April 1990.

Those non-metro areas that are adjacent to metro areas.

Total	Non-metro Adjacent Metro #	Non-metro Non-Adjacent	Change 1980-90
N=152	**N=82**	**N=70**	
2.2*	**1.5***	**.7**	**.8**
1.5*	**.8**	**.7**	
.7	.4	.3	
.4	.3	.1	
.4*	.1	.3	
.7	**.7**	**0**	**1.0**
.3	.3	0	
.3	.3	0	
.1	.1	0	
3.5	**2.7**	**.8**	**.5**
0	0	0	
1.7	1.2	.5	
1.8	1.5	.3	
1.7	**.5***	**1.1***	
0	0	0	
.3*	.1	.2	
1.2	.3	.8	
.2*	.1	.1	
7.4*	**4.7***	**2.6***	**2.3**
5.68%			

* Rounding error

[1] Lost population from 1980 to 1990. Sources: ERS, Bureau of Census, County Estimate Service, 1988, and , January 1990.

Constructively Using the Natural Environment in an Urbanizing Region

I. Rationale

If the quantity and quality of natural resources in the Northeast are to be maintained for current and multi-future uses, traditional approaches to their management and use must be changed. This is the issue that is unique to the Northeast region when contrasted to the regions nationwide. Attention must be given to a more holistic perspective, one that is guided by and in tune with a multi-objective approach. This approach must accommodate the differing objectives of rural resource owners, urban dwellers, and the general public who rely on rural land, air, and water resources for sustenance, recreation, and aesthetics.

The nearly fifty-nine million people in the Northeastern states place immediate pressures on limited land and water area. New awareness of the severe frictions among competing interests has led to increasing regulation of our rural resources.

We need to shift toward constructive use of these rural resources, incorporating current production uses with regeneration and preser-vation practices for future generations. This change will require an adjustment from single-use practices to more multiple-use strategies.

II. Questions for Research and Extension Programs

For research and extension projects, many of the following factors associated with expansion of the urban/rural fringe illustrate development in rural areas. Some of the most visible public issues are land use, land cover, zoning, planning, access to natural and recreational resources, solid waste disposal, water quality and quantity, pollution, wildlife management, wilderness and open space preservation, agricultural preservation, community vitality, transportation, and community specialization. From this variety of issues, many researchable questions emerge that when answered will provide the base for formulating extension educational programs.

Issues highlighted on the fringe.

- What is the "fringe?" What are the characteristics of the fringe as they vary by area? What patterns of issues are associated with the encroachment by urbanized society upon traditionally rural areas? What is the perceived priority by rural residents, urban dwellers, and the general public of the more visible fringe area issues as they vary by place of residence?
- What is the process of transition from informal economic activities to formal economic activities?

Issues focusing on the use and future of space.

- What are the cogent strategies for preserving scenic landscapes?
- What are the implications of land fragmentation and its impact on community?
- What are the workable techniques for preserving open space?
- What are the workable strategies for facilitating local planning and zoning efforts?

Specific environmental and resource-based pollution issues.

- What are the sources of disagreement among various groupings of people and their values relating to water quality and quantity in the Northeast?
- What are the social implications of atmospheric pollution in the Northeast? What are the alternatives of solid and hazard ous waste disposal?

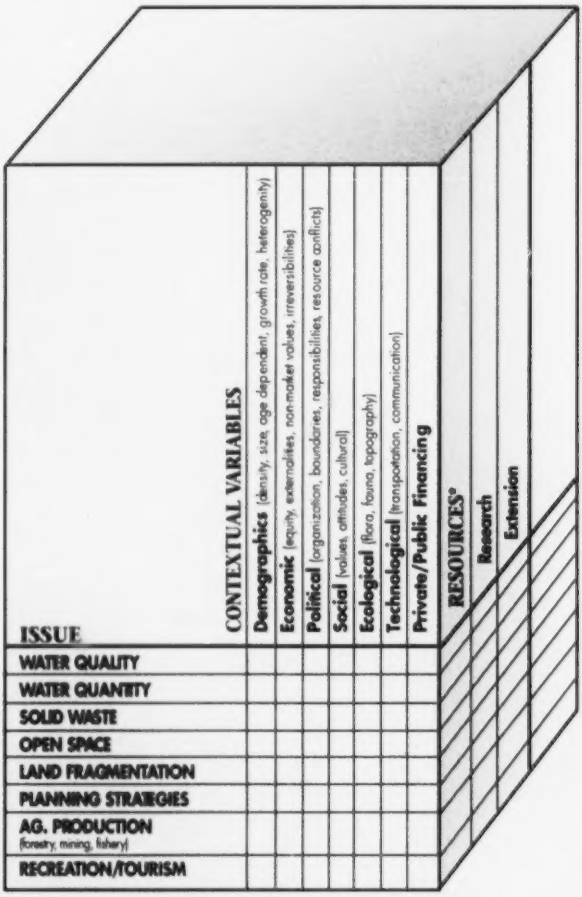
Issues about maintaining the rural economy and promoting rural development within the confines of a balanced ecology.

- What is the role of tourism in the Northeast?
- What is the relationship of recreational uses of land among local, state, and regional clients?
- What is the current and future role of forestry, mining, fishery, and production agriculture in the Northeast?

III. Analytical Framework

The context within which current and future rural natural resources will be used is illustrated in Exhibit 1. The environmental issues (water quality, water quantity, etc.) can be influenced both positively and negatively by several contextual variables—demographics, economics, political system, etc.—and research and extension programs can be activated to assist people in grappling with the particular issues.

EXHIBIT 1: Framework for Identifying, Analyzing, and Addressing the Natural Environmental Issues



*Only Land Grant System resources are considered here. However, local, state, and federal resources could be brought to bear on particular rural resource problems.

KEY ISSUES:

Enhance Rural Economic Productivity and Adaptability

I. Rationale

Major socio-economic changes are under way that will affect the ability of Northeastern states to maintain productive and sustainable rural economies. Rural economies face particular problems in adapting to these changes because of their small size, geographic isolation, low population density, lack of employment diversification, and traditional dependence on natural-resource based industries and routine manufacturing. Forces of change include:
(1) Structural realignments affecting the economic bases of rural economies. Among the key realignments are: integration with the global marketplace, technological innovations influencing the labor, management, and capital requirements of rural businesses, need for the value-added industry, which sustains natural resource economies in remote areas of our region.
(2) Cyclical trends in the national and global economies affecting the stability and growth of local rural economies. These trends include small, industrially specialized (manufacturing-dependent) economies, which are particularly vulnerable to macro-economic shifts; and new opportunities for businesses to anticipate and plan for such challenges.
(3) More effective transportation and information linkages, which have increased rural-urban and regional economic integration. Such integration provides opportunities for employment, marketing, tourism, and inter-local cooperation.

Applied research and extension can help public and private decision makers adjust to the changes. These research and extension activities should focus on ameliorating problems and taking advantage of potential opportunities.

II. Questions for Research and Extension Programs

Highest Priority

How are the economic, social, and environmental impacts of economic development distributed geographically and among population groupings?

- How are the benefits and costs of different types of development distributed to various socio-demographic groups within the community?
- How do differences in community economic and institutional structures lead to different distributions of impacts?
- What is the role of local government in influencing the distribution of impacts?

What are the impacts of economic changes on the revenues and expenditures of rural local governments and communities?

- What are the sources of revenues and expenditures (costs) to both the local government and local residents?
- What are the implications of economic changes on the existing economic and social structure of the local community in terms of economic benefits and social costs?
- How do the revenues and expenditures of the local government promote a sustainable economic growth in the rural community?

What are the economic and social outcomes of public and private investments in physical infrastructure for growth and stability of rural economies?

- How do major infrastructures, such as the interstate highway system, reservoirs, power lines, and fiber optics, benefit the growth and development of rural areas?
- What are the impacts of public investment on industrial park development?
- What is the comparative advantage of public versus private investments in physical infrastructure for growth and stability of rural economies?
- What are the barriers to public and/or private investment in physical infrastructure affecting the growth and stability of rural economies?

What are the key factors in the community social and physical environment that enhance sustainable local economic activity?

Next Priority

What are the implications of changes in the historical economic structure of the rural Northeast?

- What are the directions of change in resource-based manufacturing and service industries?
- What are the impacts of different industries in terms of numbers and types of jobs, income, demands on public and private services, demands on social physical infrastructure, and labor force supply and demand?

What are the impacts of changes in national macro-economic policy on the growth and stability of local economies?

- Through what mechanisms do national economic policy decisions affect local economic activity?
- To what extent are rural economic interests reflected in national economic policy debates?
- What impacts do national government expenditures and federal fiscal policy have on regional patterns of economic activity?
- What impacts do national economic policy responses to changes in international economic forces have on the level and distribution of economic activity in rural areas?

What institutions play a critical role in the promotion and maintenance of rural economic well-being, and how can such institutions be developed and maintained?

- What institutional programs or strategies are most effective for promoting rural economic well-being?
- How much financial support is needed to maintain the minimum institutional structure and programs required for economic well-being?

How do changes in financial institutions affect the cost and availability of capital used to support rural economic development?

- What are the comparative advantages and disadvantages of interstate banking on economic development in rural areas?

- What barriers do credit institutions face which inhibit the availability of capital to support rural economic development?

What is the role of entrepreneurship in rural economic development?

- What kinds of entrepreneurial activities are found in rural areas?
- Who are the entrepreneurs in rural areas? Where do they come from? Where do they invest their profits?
- What factors affect entrepreneurial activity in rural areas? What are the factors that affect entry? Expansion?
- What are the turnover rates (risks) of different entrepreneurial activities?

What are the interrelationships between human capital and local economic development?

- How do investments in human capital respond to changing economic and social conditions?
- What are the consequences of investments in human capital for families, businesses, and communities?
- What do economic, demographic, and technological trends imply for labor markets in the Northeast?
- What policies will effectively enhance human capabilities in support of economic sustainability?

Is substate, regional and/or intermunicipal cooperation an effective mechanism for increasing the economic performance of rural economies?

- What incentives and facilitating mechanisms can be used to establish intermunicipal co-operation?
- How do cooperating entities share resources and cost?

ISSUE:
Enhance Institutions That Contribute To The Well-Being Of Individuals, Families, And Communities.

I. Rationale

Consistent with the premise that all people, regardless of age, race, ethnic origin, or location, should have equal access to the services

they need for social well-being, land-grant research and extension programs in the Northeast must respond to the fact that existing services are not meeting the special needs of some population groupings, especially in rural areas. In particular, rural development research and extension programs are challenged to perform three key tasks: to assess the delivery of services to rural communities, families, and individuals; to inform policy makers and others of the unique and pressing needs of rural groupings for human services; and to join with other groups and organizations in the search for ways of meeting these unmet needs.

Among the many population segments in the rural areas of the Northeast and among the many service needs that affect rural well-being, some groupings and services stand out as deserving top priority in rural development planning and programming. Groupings in urgent need of special attention in the rural Northeast include age-related population segments (youth and the elderly), poor and disadvantaged individuals and families, and the culturally diverse groupings now found in many rural communities. Service areas that require special attention include housing, nutrition, health, education, transportation, and communications. The objective of rural development research and extension in responding to these needs, is to present an improved understanding of issues, choices, and possible policy initiatives to service providers, service consumers, policy makers, and the community (including voters and taxpayers).

II. Questions for Research and Extension Programs

- What are the characteristics of special needs groupings in the rural areas of the Northeast—their numbers, demographic characteristics, and geographic distribution?
- What are the unmet needs of these groupings, respectively, in regard to housing, nutrition, health, education, and transportation/communication?
- What programs and facilities exist in rural communities to respond to these unmet needs, and what are the characteristics of these programs and facilities—their organizational structure, support mechanisms, innovativeness, and successes?

- What are the effects of technological, economic, and social changes on the delivery of human services to special needs groupings in rural areas?
- What strategies would be successful in assisting rural communities, families, and individuals in meeting their needs for human services?

ISSUE:
Enhance Policy Leadership, Management Capacity, and Strategic Planning to Support Rural Community Viability

I. Rationale

Agendas of local leaders and decision-makers in small and rural localities are becoming more controversial, complex, and technical. Increasing societal awareness of various issues places new burdens on rural leaders and administrators and requires a breadth of decision making on a scale not previously faced in rural localities.

These issues include concerns about the environment and natural resources; roads, highways, and infrastructure; environmental impacts; waste management and water quality; fire protection and law enforcement; health care and recreation; education and social service; liability insurance and risk management; and changing local economies and changing local economic export and tax bases.

The ability and effectiveness of local officials to provide public policy direction in response to societal demands represented by federal and state mandates, and to provide appropriate and adequate public services, depend on the adequacy of local institutions and their decision making and implementation methods. Part-time citizen politicians, high turnover in leadership and policy positions, shortage of staff to provide for technical expertise and administration, and increased financial pressures to meet growing internal and mandated demands all leave rural localities at a disadvantage relative to more urban places. If rural localities are to function effectively in dealing with the issues they face, sophisticated and workable planning and policies that require access to considerable expertise must be generated. Plans and policies

must then be managed and administered efficiently to take advantage of available local resources and future opportunities.

If policy leadership, management capacity, and strategic planning to support rural community governance are to be enhanced, research and educational programs must be useful, timely, deliverable, workable, affordable, and have utility for users.

II. Questions for Research and Extension Programs

How effective are alternative forms of local leadership in setting local agendas and stimulating more effective strategic planning and management in rural localities?

What are the alternative approaches (traditional and new) to improving policy leadership skills and processes as well as the management capacities of local decision-makers in rural or small communities?

- How do we create new techniques and approaches?
- How do we share information on technique and approaches from other settings?
- How do we evaluate the utility of different techniques and approaches?
- How do we implement and deliver them to local decision makers?

What methodologies can help community decision-makers identify educational programs related to policy leadership effectiveness, improved decision-making, problem-solving, and technical assistance?

What data bases are needed to develop decision support systems—such as financial, economic demographic, environmental, and needs assessment—at local and regional levels?

How should data be organized to assist local leaders in identifying problems and establishing policy issue priorities?

What is the relative utility and effectiveness of various models or frameworks designed to guide the application of data to decision-making processes?

Extension Programming

The land-grant cooperative extension system should continue to deliver educational programs that address the needs (linked with public policy) of rural residents in the Northeast region identified by its Mission Statement. These programs, centered on state, regional, and national initiatives, should be developed, delivered, and evaluated within the following parameters and they should reflect a holistic orientation linking rural and urban localities within a global society; they should concern the relationship of individuals, families, organizations, and communities with the environment; and they should utilitize interdisciplinary teams of research/extension faculty across the entire regional land-grant system and beyond.

Specifically, extension programming should consider:

1. Establishing or continuing interdisciplinary teams created to fit the nature of the particular problem or set of problems it seeks to resolve. This often requires a reallocation of resources by administrators and, in general, a high degree of admininistrative flexibility and ability to re-establish priorities.

2. The necessity for coordinating efforts in rural development with a variety of organizations within and outside a single state's land-grant university. Not all the relevant research bases and teaching resources will be found in a single college or land-grant institution. Rural development efforts also should involve non-land-grant institutions in the Northeast region as well as relevant federal, state, and local government agencies, and private organizations with complementary interests, knowledge bases, and other resources. In many in stances, efforts may be best coordinated on a multi-state or regional basis.

3. Strengthening its leadership role in rural development through the spectrum of Cooperative Extension System talents and system wide resources, while recognizing the need to supplement these with resources outside of extension. Extension must be proactive in rural development rather than wait until

specific rural development issues are forced upon it by the clientele or legislative action. Public policy education on a regional basis as developed through a regional ad hoc committee is essential to a proactive approach.

Strategies for the Key Rural Development Issues

There appears to be a need in the Northeast region to redefine station and extension methods of agenda setting as well as the very framework that holds the agenda together. Several phenomena make this imperative.

In the northeastern United States, less than 8 percent of the population actually resides in nonmetropolitan areas, and less than 3 percent are directly engaged in production agriculture. Shift in population and declines in agricultural employment suggest a need for rearranging both station and extension agendas.

The prevailing model is influenced by those interests who mobilize to affect the agenda. We propose a new paradigm that focuses systematically on the relationship between the physical and social world, that considers structural and cyclical economic changes now under way, and that emphasizes the capacity of people and institutions to manage change.

This paradigm enlarges our audience/constituency but also focuses it on those people and groups with interests in the four issues we have described. We need to consider the reallocation of resources to interdisciplinary team efforts aimed at long-term ecological planning, strategic thinking to take advantage of economic changes, human capital building, and increasing the capacity of institutions.

A vision and a strategy are needed to guide the development of the nonmetropolitan Northeast region in concert with its metropolitan counterpart. The legacy of the land-grant university stipulates a strong proactive role in providing this leadership. Let us continue the legacy.